

**MINUTES OF THE
AUBURN CITY PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
JUNE 3, 2008**

The regular session of the Auburn City Planning Commission was called to order on June 3, 2008 at 6:11 p.m. by Chairman Smith in the Council Chambers, 1225 Lincoln Way, Auburn, California.

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Spokely, Nardini-Hanson, Worthington, Kidd, Chrm. Smith

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: Merz, Briggs, Elder

STAFF PRESENT: Wilfred Wong, Community Development Director; Reg Murray, Senior Planner; Sue Fraizer, Administrative Assistant

ITEM I: CALL TO ORDER

ITEM II: APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of the May 6, 2008 meeting were approved as submitted.

ITEM III: PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

ITEM IV: PUBLIC HEARING ITEMS

A. **Use Permit - 860 Pacific Street (Auburn Overlook Staging Area) - File # UP 08-3.** The applicant requests approval of a Use Permit to establish a gravel parking lot at 860 Pacific Street by the Western States Trail Foundation.

Comm. Worthington excused herself from this item because she designed the site plan which creates a conflict of interest.

Director Wong presented the staff report. He described the proposed improvements and explained that a Use Permit is required due to the gravel parking lot being located in the Auburn Dam Overlook Area. Staff recommends approval of this project.

Comm. Spokely pointed out that the skate board park is near this facility and asked if there were any sound studies done.

Director Wong replied that this project did not necessitate a sound study.

The public hearing was opened.

The applicant, Mike Pickett of 3510 Auburn Folsom Road in Loomis elaborated on the Western States Trail Foundation as well as the project itself.

Lisa Worthington, 174 Tuttle Street in Auburn stated that she feels this project will increase the multiple use opportunities of the community, and she supports it.

There were no further comments from the audience. The public hearing was closed.

Comm. Nardini-Hanson **MOVED** to:

Adopt Resolution No. 08-12 (Exhibit A) to approve a Use Permit (File #UP 08-3) to establish a gravel parking lot at 860 Pacific Street by the Western States Trail Foundation.

Comm. Spokely **SECONDED**.

AYES: Spokely, Nardini-Hanson, Chrm. Smith
NOES: None
ABSTAIN: Worthington
ABSENT: Merz

The motion was approved.

Comm. Worthington returned to her seat.

- B. **Design Review Permit, Variance, and Tree Permit - 13089 Lincoln Way (Hampton Inn & Suites) - Files DRP 07-5; VA 07-6; TP 07-5.** The applicant requests approval of a Design Review Permit, Variance, and Tree Permit in order to construct a 104 room, three-story hotel building at the southwest corner of Lincoln Way and Russell Road. The Design Review Permit addresses site design issues such as parking, landscaping, and building architecture. The Variance permits an exception to the allowable building height limit and the Tree Permit allows the removal of ±285 native trees as well as impacts to remaining trees.

Planner Murray presented the staff report. He reviewed the details of the proposal, including access and improvements, grading, drainage, services, landscaping, lighting, architectural plans and signs. He

pointed out that the parking planned for the project exceeds parking requirements.

He explained that a Variance is needed due to the building exceeding the 40 foot height limit in some areas. Although the building is 3-story, it appears to be 2-story from the Lincoln Way elevation.

Planner Murray reviewed the details of the Tree Permit. He also explained that the applicant will need to process a lot line adjustment on the northwest corner common property line.

Staff has received several letters of concern about this project which are included in the staff report. A memo has been provided to the Commissioners regarding the Auburn Police Department's requirement for improved communications within the building. Staff has added a Condition of Approval that a VHF Bi-Directional Amplifier (BDA) shall be provided in the building to the satisfaction of the Auburn Police Department.

Comm. Worthington asked for further explanation of the cooperative agreement for interchangeable parking with the adjacent pad site.

Planner Murray explained the agreement.

Comm. Worthington asked if she is correct in her calculation that the highest point of the building is 48 feet.

Planner Murray replied that it is 48 feet at the tallest point which is at the entry.

Comm. Worthington asked what the average height of the proposed building is.

Planner Murray replied that the average height of the building is approximately 43 feet.

Comm. Worthington asked why the amount of trees was initially 285 and now the amount of trees is 240.

Planner Murray replied that he is unsure what the information is based on. This question could be posed to the applicant.

Jack Warren, City of Auburn Public Works Director came to the podium.

Comm. Worthington asked Director Warren why an upgrade to the sewer lift station is being recommended as opposed to a full replacement.

Director Warren replied that when it is finished, it will be a full replacement.

Comm. Worthington asked if in its current configuration the cost to maintain the lift station is borne by the Auburn Woods Homeowners Association.

Director Warren replied that the cost is currently borne by Auburn Woods.

Comm. Worthington asked if the Auburn Woods homeowners will get a 95% new lift station as a result of this project.

Director Warren said yes, that is correct.

Comm. Spokely stated that he believes the improvements and upgrades to the sewer system would benefit the Auburn Woods homeowners.

Director Warren agreed that the Auburn Woods homeowners would benefit from the proposed upgrades.

Comm. Spokely stated that he spoke with a representative of Auburn Woods community and was told that there are regular malfunctions with the current sewer facility. He expressed concern about tying a private facility with a public facility.

Director Warren gave an example of another new apartment complex nearby that combined private and public facilities.

Chrm. Smith asked if the City will bear any cost for upgrading the lift station to current standards.

Director Warren replied that there will be no cost to the City of Auburn with the exception of the cost to maintain it.

Comm. Worthington asked staff for more information about the traffic analysis.

Planner Murray explained the traffic study.

Comm. Worthington asked if there are Placer County projects in process in this area.

Planner Murray said that he is not aware of any, but Director Warren may have knowledge of other projects that are in process.

Comm. Worthington asked if the only comment from Cal Trans was regarding drainage.

Planner Murray replied that this is correct, and conditions have been placed based upon Cal Trans' comments.

Comm. Worthington asked if the in-lieu fee for tree mitigation has increased.

Planner Murray replied that neither the mitigation requirements nor the mitigation fees have changed since the ordinance was adopted. He further explained the fee and what it is based on.

Comm. Nardini-Hanson asked if the Lincoln Way side of the building is viewed as two-story.

Planner Murray used the overhead projection of the plan and explained how the building will be viewed.

Comm. Spokely asked if there was any discussion about creating a "right-in, right-out" limitation for the southern driveway. He also questioned the projected amount of cars in and out during peak hours.

Director Warren replied that the traffic engineer, Ken Anderson performed the traffic study and that he accepts Mr. Anderson's recommendation.

Comm. Spokely asked if the proposed drainage is adequate.

Director Warren replied that it meets the criteria of being equal to or better than pre-project.

Comm. Spokely asked if the sound study addressed whether the existing trees absorb any freeway noise.

Planner Murray replied that the sound study did not specifically address that issue, but staff's experience is that trees themselves do not provide much sound attenuation.

Chrm. Smith asked what the proposed height of the building is on the Auburn Woods side.

Planner Murray replied that it is approximately 30 to 35 feet.

The public hearing was opened.

The applicant, Garrett Grialou of Renesson Hotel Group stated that they are concerned about the overall quality of the project. The facility will not have a restaurant inside and will not have extensive

meeting rooms. The facility will have a pool, jacuzzi, fitness room, business center and two media rooms. They have worked long and hard to create a hotel that makes sense and retains as many of the natural features as possible.

Comm. Worthington stated that berms are a good sound buffer and the site plan shows the use of berms and trees on the perimeter with special attention to the buffer zone between the hotel and Auburn Woods.

Mr. Grialou stated that this is correct and that they attempted to save as many trees as possible. They have spent a lot of time going between the arborist and the landscape architect trying to save trees. Additionally, they met with the Auburn Woods Homeowners Association, listened to their concerns and agreed to plant trees between the two properties.

Comm. Worthington asked about approval by the Army Corps. of Engineers.

Mr. Grialou replied that they have verbal approval for their mitigation plan from the Army Corps. of Engineers.

Comm. Worthington stated that this project includes a large tree loss. She asked what measures they have taken to save more trees.

Mr. Grialou described the process that they have gone through with regard to the retention of trees.

Comm. Spokely asked whether the berms shown in the plans will remain.

Jim Rato, with RYS Architects on behalf of Renesson Hotel Groups, replied that some of the berms along Lincoln Way will be removed for the placement of driveways.

Gary Mapa of 350 Cuckoo Court in Applegate stated that he feels that the applicant has done a good job and he is pleased to see this type of project. However, he feels the northerly encroachment is too close to the overpass and it needs a 4-way stop or traffic lights there.

Darren Ross of 13005 Lincoln Way, Ste. B in Auburn said that he represents the Auburn Woods Homeowner's Association board. He has concerns about the environmental impact, including excessive removal of trees and the height of the proposed building. They would like a bigger buffer zone. They would like for the building to be moved closer to Lincoln Way. They are interested in upgrading the sewer system and having the City take it over.

Mary Dietrich of 175 Ida Street in Auburn is President of the Auburn Woods Homeowner's Association. The HOA is concerned with the height of the building, the fencing and landscape buffer. She provided the Commissioners with photos of the Elm Plaza building as a comparison of the proposed building height. She suggests that the portico height be reduced, that the building be changed from three stories to two stories, that more dust control measures be taken and that the hours of construction do not include the week-ends. They would also like for the fence height to be raised and the sign size to be reduced.

Phillip Johannsen of 100 Lincoln Way in Auburn stated that he would like the applicant to consider a two-story building. He feels that the ingress and egress driveways should be on Russell Road.

Julie Nencini of 13170 Lamborn Lane in Auburn stated that she walks in this area and she does not want to see a hotel there. If it was two-story and fewer rooms it would be better.

Jane Cameron of 13025 Lincoln Way, #95 in Auburn who resides in the Auburn Woods building is the President of the Auburn Woods II Association. A lot of wildlife comes into the Auburn Woods complex and she is concerned about displacing them. She is concerned that property values will decrease due to additional traffic, lighting, supply and trash trucks and a likely increase in crime.

Barbara Ogden of 130 Flood Lane in Auburn stated that this area is very rural and a big hotel would change that. The Auburn Woods complex is peaceful and serene. She asked that another restaurant not be allowed. She is opposed to the large size of the hotel. She feels that much more traffic will be created by this project than the traffic report indicates.

Mark Havener of 211 Sierra Way in Auburn stated that he is concerned with the height impact and the traffic. He feels the building should be two-story at the most.

Gary Mapa stated that he feels this project is much different than the Elm Plaza building. Asking the applicant to build the hotel as a 2-story structure may not be financially feasible.

Jim Rato with RYS Architects stated that they have tried their best to work with the planners to create a project that will work in the City. He explained the reason for the tree removal. He said they believe they are mitigating in terms of replacing trees in kind. They worked with the planning staff and the fire department to lessen the paved areas of the site.

The public hearing was closed.

Comm. Spokely thanked everyone for their comments. He asked what kind of occupancy studies was performed. He asked if a two-story hotel was considered by the applicant. He stated that he'd like for the lighting to be minimized to address the concerns of the neighbors. He asked if there is a different fencing option available.

Comm. Nardini-Hanson asked for clarification of the landscape plan and stated that she'd like to see enhancement of the buffer between the project and Auburn Woods.

Comm. Worthington said that there could be a better fit architecturally. She would like to see more exposed timbers, hardy-plank siding and a two-story "lodge" feel to the building. She stated that she is in favor of the City taking over the sewer lift station. She suggested that more trees be planted in the parking lot area. She asked how the Auburn Woods Homeowner's fees will change with the sewer update. She'd like to see the lighting lowered. She thinks the building itself may be a noise barrier. She is very concerned about the signage and would like the applicant to explain why signage was not addressed in the application. She asked the applicant to explain what options they were given by the Fire Chief for the driveway configuration. She asked for clarification about the addition of the restaurant at a later date.

Chrm. Smith stated that he also is concerned about signage, sewer, safety (lighting), trees, the landscaping and the buffer.

Mr. Grialou said that they realize the current lift station is substandard and in need of significant repair. There is an agreement that allows the owner of their parcel to use the lift station. They realize that the additional capacity required for their project would require it to be expanded. They are prepared to replace the lift station and bring it to City standards. That would impact the homeowners at Auburn Woods favorably. In looking at the feasibility of the project, they need at least 100 rooms to make it work. They are amenable to modifying the fencing. They are willing to try to increase the buffer area. They can look into lighting that is either lower or shielded. They have done a lot on the design to create a building that would blend into the area. They are willing to look into ways to create a better sound barrier. They are still looking into signage and need to gather more information before a sign proposal is submitted. They believe the parking lot is sufficient for their type of use.

Comm. Worthington asked why they are not planning a restaurant inside the hotel.

Mr. Grialou replied that a Hampton Inn does not allow a full-service restaurant inside the facility.

Chrm. Smith asked what type of restaurant is anticipated.

Mr. Grialou said it's very difficult to say, but in the past they've built a Max's, or other mid-scale restaurant.

Comm. Spokely asked where deliveries will occur.

Mr. Grialou replied that deliveries will be on the southeast portion of the building and will likely be weekly deliveries of linens and cleaning supplies. Deliveries will be during normal business hours.

Mr. Rato spoke about the number of light fixtures that are required, and light spill. They can work with staff on the lighting. They are willing to work with staff on the fencing. He spoke about the height of the building, explaining that at only one point is the building at 48 feet. He spoke about the amount of trees they will be retaining and replacing.

Comm. Spokely mentioned that there may be an opportunity to remove a few parking stalls and install landscaping fingers to provide more of a buffer.

Comm. Nardini-Hanson asked what type of fencing they decided on.

Mr. Rato replied that he feels that a concrete block wall is too harsh. He feels that wood lattice work fencing that would have vines growing on it would be a better option, and could help with blocking the lighting.

There was discussion about the retaining wall.

Mr. Rato explained the parking lot configuration and stated that this plan meets the Fire Chief's requirements.

Comm. Worthington feels that the parking lot exceeds what is required. She suggested that a large area of parking spaces be eliminated and a double wide tree-planted area be added to increase the landscape. She asked if they would be satisfied with twenty less parking spaces.

Mr. Grialou replied that sometimes all of the proposed parking spaces may be needed. They could comfortably eliminate a few of the parking spaces, but not as many as twenty.

Planner Murray referenced the staff report section that shows the City of Auburn's parking standards, which is about half of what other jurisdictions require. He agrees that with the current plan, there is only room for a reduction of a few parking spaces.

Comm. Spokely stated that he feels that strategically placing a two-bay wide finger would be beneficial, particularly in considering placement between buildings.

Comm. Worthington said she feels that the applicant should be more generous in giving up parking spaces to provide more landscaping.

Chrm. Smith asked Planner Murray to review the different concerns that the Commissioners have expressed. Planner Murray reviewed the concerns and the conditions he has created or modified to address them.

The Commissioners and Staff discussed other additions and changes to the conditions.

Comm. Spokely said that he believes this Hampton Inn is a nice upgrade from the typical Hampton Inn and he thinks it will fit well aesthetically.

Comm. Worthington stated that she feels a two-story facility would be a better fit. She feels that an increase in the landscape buffer would be an improvement.

Comm. Spokely **MOVED** to:

Adopt Planning Commission Resolution 08-11 for the Hampton Inn & Suites development (Files # DRP 07-5; VA 07-6; TP 07-5) as amended by the Planning Commission to include the following:

Add Condition 7.g. A 6' tall solid wood fence with metal posts shall be provided along the south property line.

Add Condition 7.h. The applicant shall provide additional 8' wide landscape planters in the parking lot along the southern property line. The planters shall include trees and are provided with the intent of providing additional screening between the properties.

Modify Condition 8.a. The maximum height of freestanding lights between the building and the southern property line shall be 14'. The maximum

height of freestanding lights throughout the remainder of the site shall not exceed 18'.

Add Condition 15. A VHF Bi-Directional Amplifier (BDA) shall be provided in the hotel building to the satisfaction of the Police Department and Community Development Department and shall be demonstrated on the construction documents submitted for a building permit. The BDA shall be compatible with the City radio system and shall allow the City's portable radios to operate within the hotel's structure. (Police; CDD)

Modify Condition 47. It is currently proposed to complete necessary upgrades to the existing private Auburn Woods sanitary sewer lift station and serve this project by this means. This lift station shall meet minimum design and capacity requirements prepared by the design engineer and approved with the improvement plans by the City Engineer. The Hampton Inn developer shall secure written permission from the owner(s) of the lift station to improve the lift station. It is the intent of the City to accept the lift station upon completion of the upgrades.

Chairman Smith **SECONDED.**

AYES: Spokely, Nardini-Hanson, Chrm. Smith
NOES: Worthington
ABSTAIN: None
ABSENT: Merz

The motion was approved.

Chrm. Smith reminded the audience of the 10 calendar day appeal period.

ITEM V: COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT FOLLOW-UP REPORTS

- A. City Council Meetings
No report.
- B. Future Planning Commission Meetings
There will be a meeting on June 17, 2008.
- C. Reports
None.

ITEM VI: PLANNING COMMISSION REPORTS

None.

ITEM VII: FUTURE PLANNING COMMISSION AGENDA ITEMS

None.

ITEM IX: ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 9:59 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Fraizer, Administrative Assistant